

## OFFICE OF JURY COMMISSIONER *for the Commonwealth*

**DO NOT RELEASE BEFORE:**  
February 12, 2007

**For more information, contact:**  
Pamela J. Wood, Jury Commissioner  
(617) 422-5860, ext. 202

### **OFFICE OF JURY COMMISSIONER WARNS AGAINST JURY DUTY TELEPHONE SCAM**

The Office of Jury Commissioner is warning the public to beware of a jury duty telephone scam, after receiving a flurry of reports that this nationwide identity theft con has recently reached Massachusetts. Citizens from around the state have received calls from people claiming to be court officials chasing scofflaws who have missed jury duty. When the target protests that they knew nothing of the supposedly missed jury duty, the caller demands personal identifying information (such as Social Security numbers and dates of birth) to confirm that the target is not at risk of fine or arrest.

“This is a particularly ingenious scam because it preys on people’s fears and indignation at being falsely accused of breaking the law,” said Pamela J. Wood, Jury Commissioner for the Commonwealth. “The scam artist will often pose as a sheriff or court officer, and state that you or someone close to you, such as your child or spouse, has missed jury duty and will be fined or arrested if they don’t report to the court immediately. Because the caller isn’t selling something or directly asking for personal information, the target often doesn’t recognize the scam and is only too eager to offer information to persuade the caller that they’ve made a mistake.” The jury duty scam has been reported in many other states over the past year, but is only now appearing in Massachusetts.

The telephone call is a clear indication that the call is bogus, according to Commissioner Wood. She reports that neither the Office of Jury Commissioner nor the courts ever

## **Office of Jury Commissioner**

---

contact jurors by telephone regarding their jury service. While skipping jury duty will lead to reminder notices and eventual prosecution if not resolved, all communications are sent through the mail. A person who has missed jury duty will be instructed to call the Office of Jury Commissioner, but only after receiving written notice by mail with details about the date and place of their missed jury service.

The Office of Jury Commissioner offers the following guidelines to anyone who gets a call about missing jury duty:

If you receive a telephone call claiming that you or someone you know has missed jury duty, under no circumstances should you give the caller any personal information about yourself or anyone else. Hang up and call the Office of Jury Commissioner at (800) THE-JURY (843-5879), or send an e-mail to [\*\*JurorHelp@jud.state.ma.us\*\*](mailto:JurorHelp@jud.state.ma.us), requesting confirmation of your juror status. Don't be victimized by someone trying to take advantage of your sense of civic duty.

For more information on identity theft, how to avoid it, and what to do if you've been victimized, the following resources are available:

- Massachusetts Attorney General's Consumer Hotline: (617) 727-8400
- [\*\*www.Mass.Gov\*\*](http://www.Mass.Gov) Home Page (currently features Identity Theft)
- [\*\*www.ago.state.ma.us/filelibrary/Consumer\\_IdentityTheft.pdf\*\*](http://www.ago.state.ma.us/filelibrary/Consumer_IdentityTheft.pdf)
- [\*\*www.ftc.gov\*\*](http://www.ftc.gov) Home Page "Hot Topics" link: Avoid ID Theft